

30 April 1969

COINS USER TRAINING PANEL

MEETING OF 24 APRIL 1969

1. In attendance:

[Redacted]

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Note: [Redacted] NIC, did attend the 20 March meeting, although record of the meeting did not say so.

2. [Redacted] distributed CIA Users Manual for Non-CIA Files which tells a CIA person how to query the DIA system. Until NSA announces TILE, directions for querying the NSA system cannot be included.

3. The Chairman reported [Redacted] desire for this Panel to assume responsibility for collection, maintenance, and publication of all file descriptions. At present, this could take two forms; first, The Catalog of COINS Files, which is coming along, needing only the one-page descriptions of DIA files to have complete input. Second, making COFSA complete by inclusion of NSA files. NSA is waiting for instruction from DIA on how to prepare the data. Our past practice has been for each agency to describe files in whatever way it chose. Only with the COINS Catalog will there be a first attempt to unify the presentation. True uniformity will not be possible because of the varied attributes of the three main systems.

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4. A discussion of standardization was held, again. The Chairman put forth the opinion that people active in COINS training are going to be most aware of the consequences of diversity of data forms among COINS files, particularly of the users reactions to this diversity. We at least have a responsibility to urge standardization of the form of data (e.g. date fields) and of field codes (e.g. for fields containing person's names). Other aspects of standardization (symbols, language, procedure) remain the responsibility of the Interface Panel and the Subsystem managers, and may indeed have to wait for a follow-on system. ✓

5. An initial training session was conducted at NIC by DIA for about half the analyst work force. [Redacted] has been working closely with [Redacted] Training will continue as agreed by DIA and NIC.]

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6. In response to the DIRNSA letter of 3 April 1969 which indicated delay of the formal COINS test period, [redacted] (IHC) suggested that "During this period also it is important to inform, indoctrinate, train, and assist the eventual user/analyst since the evaluation of the success of COINS will be influenced largely by the degree to which the analyst uses the system and finds it satisfactory". The Panel discussed its position on the question of cross-system training at a time when some local systems were working well, but true COINS performance was poor. The conclusion was that every agency intends to continue training on its local system and to encourage its use, but does not intend to encourage widespread attempts to use COINS until it performs better. Persons eager to use the system will be helped, and persons needed to test the system will be trained and encouraged, but wide training will not be undertaken because of the unfortunate psychological impact of a non-performing system.

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7. The next meeting of the Panel was scheduled for 22 May at 1400 hours, at NPIC.

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Chairman
COINS User Training Panel

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